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PRAISES DECISION OF POLISH GOVERNMENT
TO SUPPORT JEWISH CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS

Hirsh Smoliar, Chairman
Central Committee of Jews in Poland

The Jewish population in Poland received with great satisfaction the news that the Polish Government, beginning with 1950, has decided to include in the state budget expenditures to cover the needs of Jewish social, educational, and cultural institutions.

Everyone who participated in the reconstruction of the new Poland is not surprised at such a decision. During the past 5 years, the activities and efforts of the Jewish working community, headed by the Central Committee of Jews in Poland, to reconstruct Jewish life, were always aided by our people's government. No Polish Jew will ever forget the great help our government has given to the thousands of repatriates, how it helped them get settled in different parts of the country. All its activities were influenced by its desire to improve the situation of the Jews in Poland, and in each case it recognized the complete equality of the Jews with the rest of the population.

In the first years of the reestablishment of our country, however, the needs of the Jewish population greatly exceeded the means of the government to meet them. Therefore, we had to appeal to the great Jewish masses throughout the world, especially in those countries which did not suffer the scourge of Hitlerism. They answered our appeal with open hearts and great enthusiasm. The Joint Distribution Committee, a US organization, placed at the disposal of the Central Committee of the Jews in Poland considerable means and material to aid the reestablishment of Jewish productive life in Poland.

But from the very beginning when assistance was first received from abroad, the organizers of Jewish life in Poland clearly proclaimed that we considered this assistance only a temporary expedient. We believe in our people's democracy. We consider ourselves equal citizens of our state and are sure that before long we shall need no foreign aid.

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Indeed, each year more institutions became independent of foreign help. The first ones to become independent and to start their own programs of support of Jewish children's homes were the progressive cooperatives. Later, the government decided to grant Jewish schools state rights and thus take over their support. The same applied to the Jewish theater.

The government's present decision to take over completely the care of Jewish cultural and educational institutions is one step forward toward their incorporation into the general scheme of public institutions in Poland. At the same time it will preserve their independence and national character.

The decision relieves the Jewish population of financial worries for the upkeep of its institutions and enables us to exert all our efforts for the further development of our cultural life and to make the Jewish population a constructive part of the newly formed socialist community.

At the same time, we desire to continue our brotherly relations with those Jewish organizations abroad, which show a favorable attitude toward the new Poland and its Jewish community. We will continue to accept their aid for the construction and improvement of our institutions as an expression of solidarity with our striving for a free and happy way of life.

On 1 January 1950, we shall achieve a new height in our social activities. It is the duty of each member and worker of Jewish institutions to undertake the necessary measures to see that the transition to institutions fully supported by the government should be well organized.

The realization of government support for our institutions should also serve to refute the false rumors spread by our enemies that the Polish government is trying to rid itself of the Jews.

The government's present decision places upon us the responsibility to double our efforts and achieve such new production heights and a standard of living which were never known before in Poland.

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